Building Organizational Capacity for Trans Inclusion

We all have to start somewhere on our individual and organizational journeys towards trans inclusion. However, many of us often struggle to take those first steps, or to understand what shape our journeys might take. This resource is intended for organizational leaders and change champions to explore an implementation-based and community-engaged approach to building organizational capacity for trans inclusion.

Step 1: Conduct preliminary staff capacity building on trans inclusion

First and foremost, organizations should build baseline competencies across their staff teams. This includes building common knowledge of key concepts related to trans inclusion, such as gender identity, gender expression, pronouns, and other core competencies. Staff training should be provided to all members of an organization - from front-line staff all the way up to senior leadership and board members - to ensure that all members of the organization have the knowledge they need to positively engage with trans communities.

Step 2: Engage trans communities and organizations

Engaging with local trans communities and organizations is essential to building organizational capacity on trans inclusion. Through engagement with local trans communities, your organization can respond to the unique needs of your region, build relationships of trust, and work with trans communities to address barriers to trans inclusion within your workplace. By creating an advisory committee, working group, or similar body, with compensated members of trans and gender diverse communities, you can work together to strengthen your organizational commitment to trans inclusion.

Step 3: Conduct a trans inclusion audit

Addressing issues and gaps regarding trans inclusion first requires a comprehensive audit of existing policies, procedures and practices, across every aspect of your organization. Consider inviting members of local trans communities to undertake a tour of your physical

locations, review your policies and procedures, model a typical intake process and otherwise audit your organization for gaps in trans inclusivity. Collect a comprehensive inventory of gaps and opportunities to be addressed through a trans inclusion strategy.

Step 4: Create a trans inclusion strategy

Based on the findings of your trans inclusion audit and input from local trans communities, develop a trans inclusion strategy to guide your efforts. Identify key activities, establish clear timelines and allocate the necessary financial resources to put your trans inclusion strategy into action. Review your trans inclusion strategy on an annual basis to assess progress, identify barriers, and adapt as needed to ensure effective implementation. In developing your inclusion strategy, review established best practices on trans inclusive policies, such as those created by the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Step 5: Provide comprehensive and ongoing trans inclusion training

Ensuring that all members of your organization have the core competencies and tools required to support trans service users is an essential first step, but organizations should also explore indepth and program-specific training for different staff teams. This ensures that all teams within an organization are gaining the specific knowledge and skills relevant to their particular roles. For example, the knowledge and tools required to provide trans-inclusive housing services are distinct from those working in a sexual health clinic, which are in turn distinct from those working in a peer drop-in program.

Step 6: Evaluate, measure, and refine trans inclusion efforts

Monitor and evaluate your trans inclusion efforts to ensure fulsome, organization-wide capacity for trans inclusion. Through ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities, you can adjust to address gaps, adapt planned activities to better align with the needs of local trans communities, and otherwise ensure that your efforts towards trans inclusion are resulting in concrete organizational and practice-based change.